

# EXPLORATION OF THE ABORIGINAL VOCATIONAL TRAINING IMPLEMENTATION STRATAGEM FROM THE OUTLOOK OF THE "TRIBAL CLASSROOM"

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**Abstract:** In recent years, the economic development and the changes in the industrial structures in Taiwan have caused the agriculture-based production structure to breakdown among the aboriginal people of Taiwan. Employment opportunities in the traditional tribal villages have declined sharply and a great numbers of people have moved out of the villages. Foreign laborers have also created a high rate of unemployment among the aboriginal people and has weakened and limited their ability to compete with others. Therefore, in order to increase Taiwan aborigines' employment competence and employment opportunities, this article will be based on the perspective of the "tribal classroom" to explore suitable approaches and methods to implement vocational training among the aborigines. It is hoped that through self-awareness among the aborigines and through employment demand that the vocational plan stressing cultural learning, livelihood work, and the tribal environment, accomplishing through by the setting up of the "tribal classroom". The plan will promote tribal culture and enterprises, increase enterprise development and employment opportunities, and create comfortable residential and the tribal villages.

## PREFACE

Recent years, the rapid growing economic development and the changes in society, harm the former way of the aborigines' self-sufficient life. It caused the agriculture-based production structure to breakdown and the employment opportunities in traditional tribal villages to decline sharply. Therefore, a large number of aborigines moved to the cities and to industrial areas for work. Agriculture production resources declined dramatically. Besides, the policy of allowing foreign laborers, has created a high rate of unemployment among the aborigines, and has weakened and limited their ability to compete with others.

Facing this problem, the government designed several programs to encourage the aborigines to participate in vocational training and to provide the employment information. But the aborigines themselves lacked the desire to participate in vocational training. There were reasons: the aborigines didn't realize the special needs of their tribe, and the place and time of training didn't fit into the tribal life style.

We have a principle of respect for multi cultural development, therefore we must respect the aborigines as we promote occupational training, localization of the occupation training. There is need the localization in the occupational training of aborigines, local circumstances need to be considered and there is need to be flexibly. The area will be relatively small; nearby groups will come together at a convenient time for training (Hsieh, 1997). This article has for its goal— suitable training for the aborigines. It is hoped that the self-awareness on the part of the aborigines and the demands of employment will bring about a vocational plan fitting the character of the aborigines.

## **THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ABORIGINES' VOCATIONAL TRAINING PLAN**

To help the aborigines to adapt to modern society and to get a job more easily, the government has encourage many efforts and promote several plans, it encourage vocational organizations and private groups to help. It has subsidized the training of aborigines. It has promoted aborigines to get positions. It has placed aborigines in employment situations. It has encouraged the private sector to hire aborigines. It has made plans for the employment of the aborigines, etc.

Mostly there were some characters within these cases as below:

### **1. Practical vocational training**

There are 13 public vocational training organizations in Taiwan, with 160 kinds of activity. The main object is to enroll the junior high school students in a training program. There is stressing, study, career change, and special vocational training (Hong etc., 1997). Besides the public vocational training organization for the aborigines, there also entrust the governmental organizations, the civil groups, the enterprises, and the school units that operate special training, and offer opportunities and space for aborigines' vocational training. As an estimated total, there are 58 classrooms, and 1622 persons have joined the training program form. July 1999 till December 2000 (Job Training Bureau of Labor Commission, Executive Yuan, 1999).

### **2. Combine vocational education and training to provide opportunities for aborigines**

18 vocational schools promote the vocational education of aborigines, and cooperate with the vocational training center, to place aborigines in jobs.

### **3. To provide preferential treatment for aborigines to join vocational training**

To aborigines to join vocational training programs, during the training period, living expenses, and scholarships, are provided. Those who get the license of a senior specialist receive special financial rewards.

### **4. To provide preferential treatment for aborigines' placement**

Those jobless aborigines who have the ability and the desire, a subsidy is granted— this provides for transportation, a temporary job, training, a business start-up. They also subsidize enterprise that hire aborigines and subsidize the placement brokers.

They are to strengthen the placement service for aborigines and vocational technical training. They are to set up a consulting committee for the placement and vocational training of aborigines. They are to print a handbook of the rights of aborigine people, are to help from labor cooperatives for aborigines (Job Training Bureau of Labor Commission, Executive Yuan, 1999). They are to strengthen the principle of equal opportunity for the vocational training of the aborigines and provide preferential treatment and special protection for aborigines. They will eliminate unfair practices through a secure placement system under the supervision of social welfare.

The results of promoting the vocational training of aborigines in recent years have been good. Undoubtedly prejudice still exists in Taiwan society. The problems the vocational training of aborigines are various and complicated. Those result from the political, economic and cultural situation on Taiwan. Chang (1999), Cheng (1998), and Hsieh (1997), pointed out the reasons why the aborigines are unwilling to enter programs of vocational training:

- ( 1) they don't realize the importance of the vocational training;
- ( 2) the training places were not suitable;
- ( 3) the time required didn't fit their needs;

- ( 4) they can not adapt to the training method;
- ( 5) the kinds of vocation training didn't correspond to the needs of tribe;
- ( 6) lack of the necessary qualification to enter the training program;
- ( 7) lack of special classes geared to them;
- ( 8) the training period is too long;
- ( 9) they are not satisfied with the preferential service;
- ( 10) they can't support their families during the training period;
- ( 11) the lack of companies managed by aborigines that could be used for training.

## THE MEANING OF "TRIBAL CLASSROOM"

During the past ten years, several new policies have been initiated for aborigines. One reason for this was the development of the "Aboriginal Movement". This movement stressed protection of aborigine culture and promotion of the aborigine language. This is promoted development among the aborigines and promoted changes in society through cooperation and dialogue (Lee, 2000).

The "Tribal Classroom" was part of the culture movement promoted by Tsur Goo-Liu of the Pai-wan Tribe. He thought the difficult situation of the aboriginal tribal development was caused by the lack of work that would support their livelihood. He through that cultural identity and awareness were necessary base for development. Through a culture renewal, the work ethic would be strengthen, through tribal organizations products would be sold locally a wider market. No longer would people have to leave from tribal environment for work. Even those who left for work might return (Tsur, 1998). There are the characteristics of the "Tribal Classroom":

**1. Based on the situation of the tribal, educational programs that promotion work and enterprise would have their own special features.**

**2. Tribal development would need culture learning, enterprise to support livelihood and protection of the environment.**

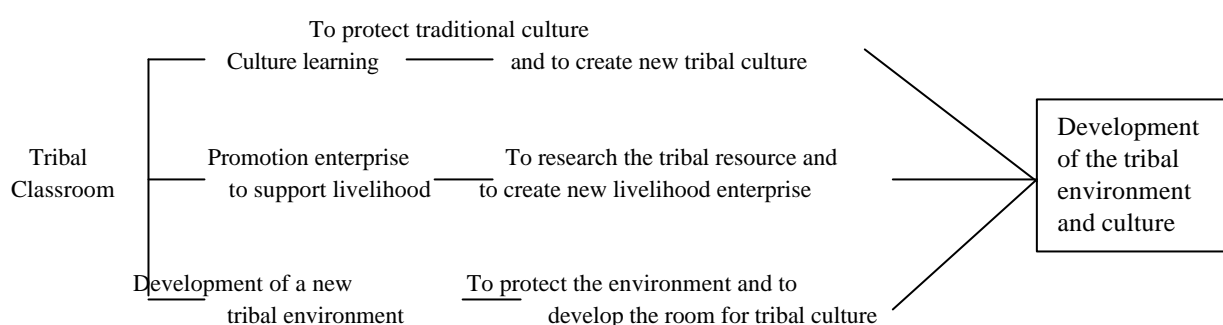


Fig. 1 The significance of "Tribal Classroom"

# THE COMBINATION OF THE "TRIBAL CLASSROOM" AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING

## 1. The concept of the combined the "tribal classroom" and vocational training

The population of the tribal groups are not only relatively few vis-a-vis other groups. But their culture is also quite different from the majority of Taiwan society. In the acculturation process of the tribal groups in the wider society, they face the choices of protecting traditional culture or adapting to modern society. The aborigines must acquire the modern technical vocational training in order to survive in economic system of modern industry. However, modern vocational production activities may conflict with the traditional culture of the aborigines. Many people think there is need develop manufacturing techniques that conform to the character of aboriginal culture (Hsieh, 1997). Hence, through self-awareness of the aborigines and their employment needs, they can combine culture learning, livelihood enterprise, and the protection of the tribal environment by using tribal resources through the "tribal classroom". It is hoped that tribal culture and enterprises will be promote, that network learning will increase, that there will be industrial development and increased employment opportunities, that comfortable residential villages will be built. See Fig. 2.

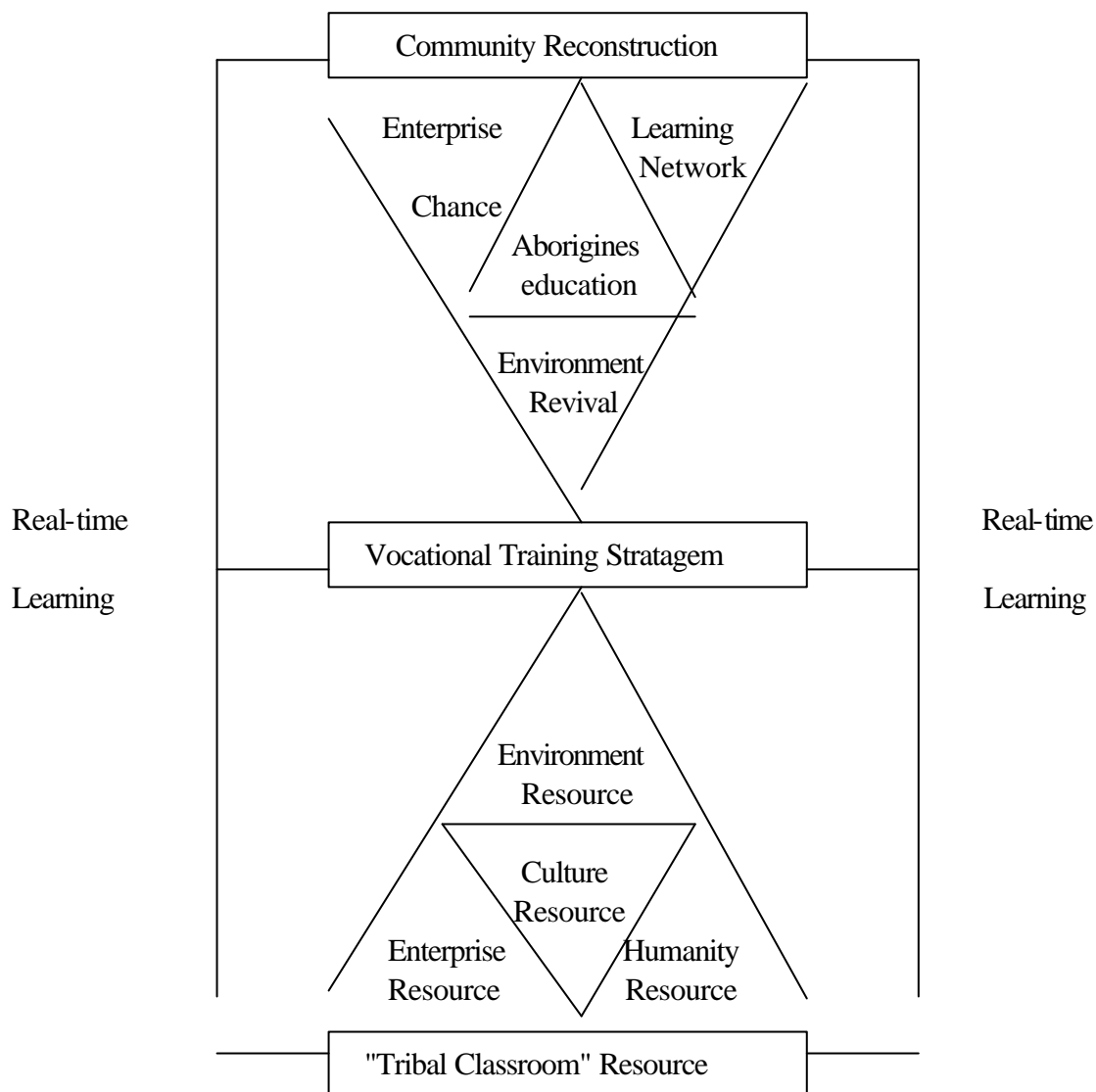


Fig. 2 The concept of the combined the "tribal classroom" and vocational training

## **2. Implementation stratagem**

( 1) Searching and preserving tribal resource is the basis for vocational education and development training. Aboriginal culture assets are preserved in the tribal community. Searching and preserving tribal resource not only can reach the goal of preserving culture, but also have as a goal the spread of culture and the creation of a new cultural. Hence, tribal culture isn't a dead specimen or only a basis for business activity, but it's the modern civilization ready to face everyday life and changing world (Tan, 1998).

( 2) Tribal villagers are to participate in making vocational training goals and in planning the courses. In the past, the aboriginal vocational training goals and courses were based on social development as a whole, but neglected the aborigines' special need for vocational training or did this in a confused manner. Through the plan of the 'tribal classroom" tribal villagers can participate in public affairs and through aborigines' self-awareness, and understanding of the present crisis they can see the need for vocational training. They can participate in making vocational training goals and planning courses and programs for their own tribal villagers.

( 3) Tribal vocational training and employment information centers are to be established. The tribal nature of the people has to be recognized. They can participate in activities locally and they will conform to their way of life. There will be improvement in the level of vocational information and training.

( 4) Vocational education and training will promote the concept of learning throughout one's life and develop the tribal learning network. By raising the education and training are effective ways to develop the manpower resource of the aborigines. Vocational education and training play a care role in "tribal learning network", provide flexible learning style and multi-purposed learning methods, establishes and develops the vocational knowledge and the aborigines and improve their intellectual capacity for daily lives.

( 5) In positively cultivates the talented aborigines who are expert at business management and sales, they will be leaders of the tribal livelihood industries. It promotes cooperation in buying and selling in the "tribal market". It will increase production and market competence of the tribal enterprises.

( 6) It uses technical methods to create extra income. It also fosters a network to share learning experiences with the other tribal villagers, through this information, they can examine and foster tribal relationship and culture identity.

( 7) It implements e tribal ecological preservation, environmental protection and the preservation of tribal villages, and reestablishes former tribal villages. By improves the tribal villagers' living standard and environment, it reinforces aborigines' self-respect and self-confidence, and promote the ability to adapt and the competence of tribal society.

## **CONCLUSION**

Economic development at times brings negative social results. It brings more uncertainty to human life. Seeking a comfortable life and harmonious society are the natural desire and needs of all. People begin to think of their future. Now some urban people are beginning to move back to countryside, to their original hometown and birthplace. Capturing the original vitality of the community will make people feel that they belong to. That is to say, in this open society, we must recognize the need for the vitality of the tribal villagers and the need for the development of vocational training. By combining these two, there is an opportunity for new vitality in the life of the aborigine people — a vitality created by themselves belonging to themselves.

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